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I'm not going to write about what any of these photos mean. It's like trying to explain what a song is about. Photos are meant to be looked at, just like songs are meant to be listened to.

However, I will write a little about what was going on during the time some of these photos were taken. On the cover is Cut The Shit (the back cover image is crowd shot at the Smell during the same show). The photo is from their show at the Smell on August 24, 2004, a good six years ago. They were on tour with the Rites, who they toured with before, and just like last time, this time around both bands were absolutely incredible live. They both played like their lives depended on it. There was no going through the motions, no half-hearted pose, no irony, no gimmick, or costume, just pure energy. Something a friend and I talk about from time to time is the energy and excitement of shows at the Smell in the early part of the 2000s. From about 2001 to roughly 2004, hardcore punk shows at the Smell were truly awesome. During that time period there were good local bands as well as great touring bands coming through. You had people coming down from Ventura, on occasion people from San Diego would come up, on the rare occasion there were folks from the Bay Area making the drive down as well. While the bands on the stage were often great, what really made these shows was the crowd. As I was putting this issue together, and when there was a photo selected that happened at the Smell I found myself looking at what the crowd was doing. Often time it seems like they were mobbing the band, as you can see in some of the Cut The Shit photos. Look at the Tear It up photos, and you know the crowd was not bored, nor content to just stand there. I think it's interesting to contrast that with a crowd that went to see the Wrangler Brutes, who were definitely a hardcore band, but drew the hipster "art" crowd, who were completely fine with just standing there being boring while watching a band rage. The same criticism can be aimed at the whole "drunk punk" cliché as well.

I really don't want to come off as nostalgic, especially for something that happened not that long ago in the grand scheme of things. That time period was truly great, and I'm jaded for sure, but I do know a good thing when I see it. I guess my whole point is, where is that crowd now? Not the actual people who were at these shows, but the crowd who really enjoys the music, doesn't give a damn about what sort of sweater you wear (or in contrast - how many spikes or studs you have on your jacket with bands you never listened once to painted on it), and are ready to go off until the very end of the show.

Also, I want to say a few words about Born Dead Icons. The photos are from two separate shows and tours. The first time I had seen these guys was at the Smell, back in 2002. and from that moment on I became a fan. Of all the heavy bands from that time period, I'd have to say they were my favorite. The music was certainly crushing, but they had really strong tuneful and melodic elements that a couple of the bigger named bands would explore later and get recognition for. Just know that Born Dead Icons were ahead of the curve. They split up a few years back, but some of them went on to start Complications, who are along the same lines. A bit more melodic, but just as good, if not better than what was before. Go get their records and listen to them. Thanks.

- Matt Average

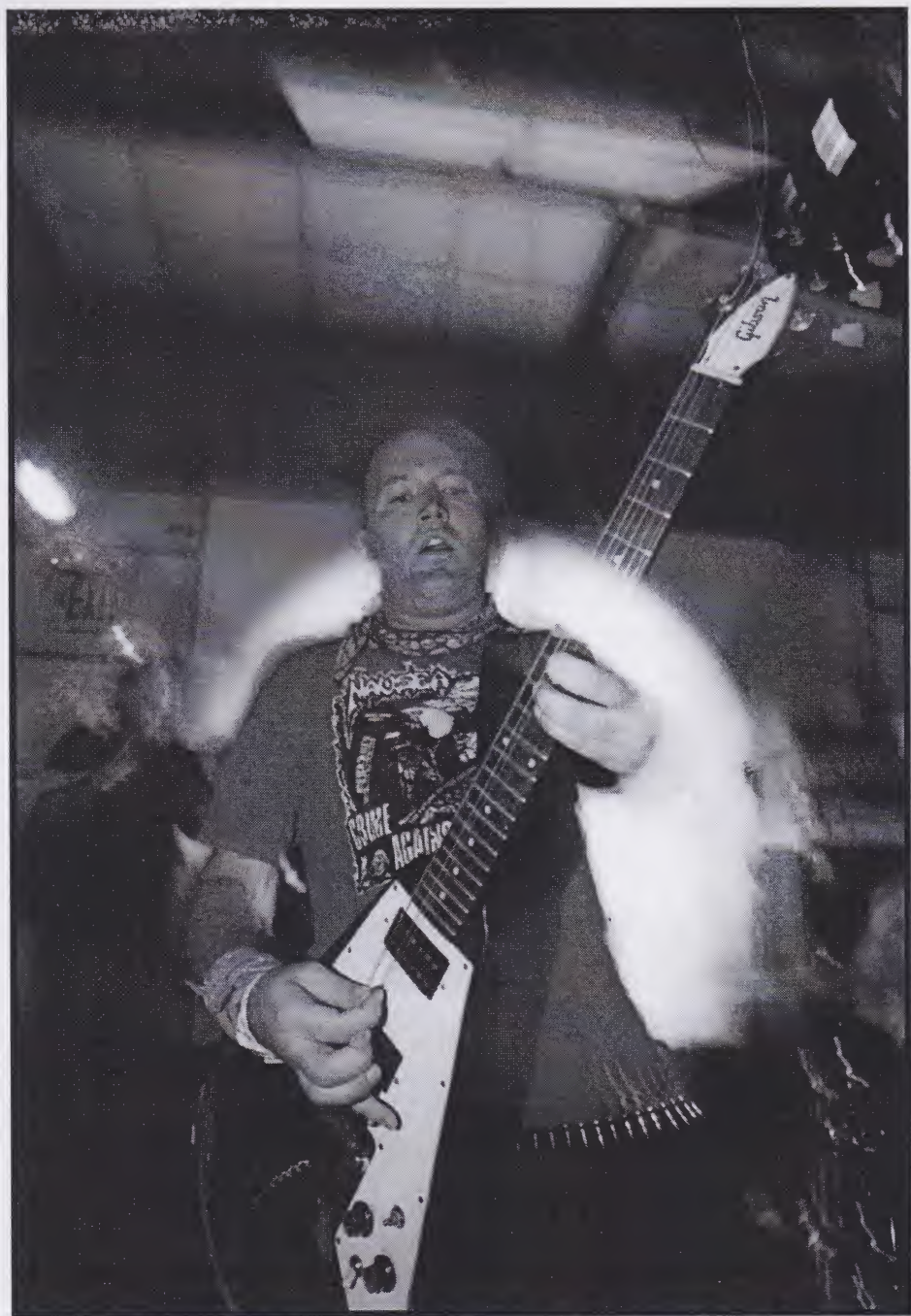
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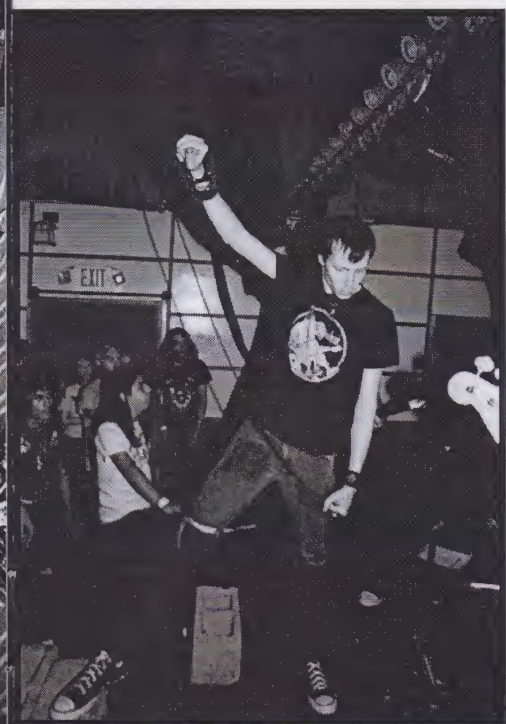
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# HELLSHOCK









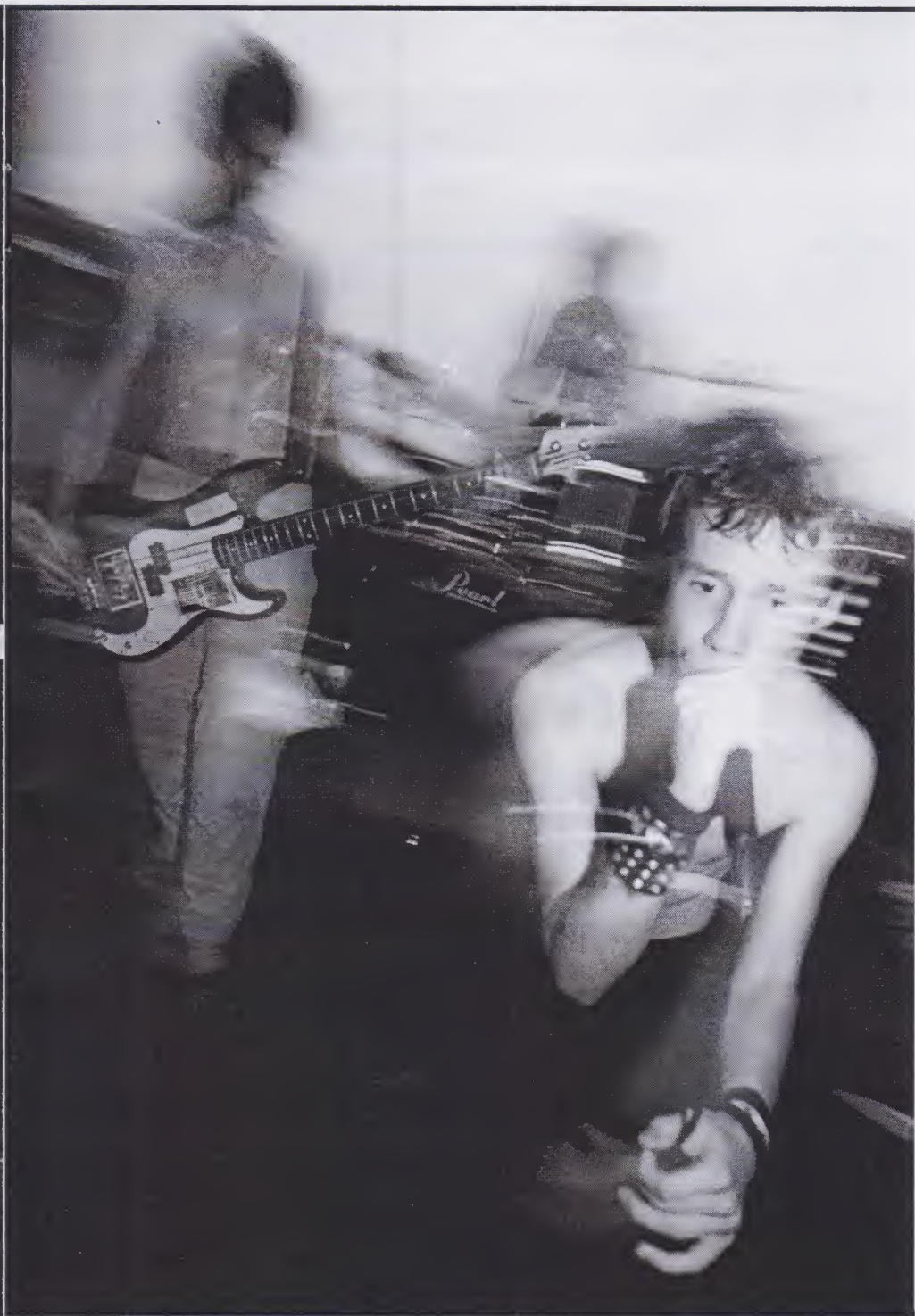


HELLSHOCK photos on this page, and the previous three pages, were taken @ Zen Sushi 9.5.06.



**NO HOPE  
FOR  
THE KIDS**





NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS, on this page and previous, from the Mexican Cultural Center in Santa Ana, CA on 7.11.04.



# KID CONGO











KID CONGO photo on this page, and the previous three, were taken at the Jensen Rec Center in Echo Park, Los Angeles on 11.10.06.



# ASSFORT





ASSFORT photos on this page, above and previous @ Gilman 9.6.96. Below @ Gilman 8.4.95











ASSFORT photos on this page @ Gilman 9.6.96. Previous page @ Epicenter 8.3.95.



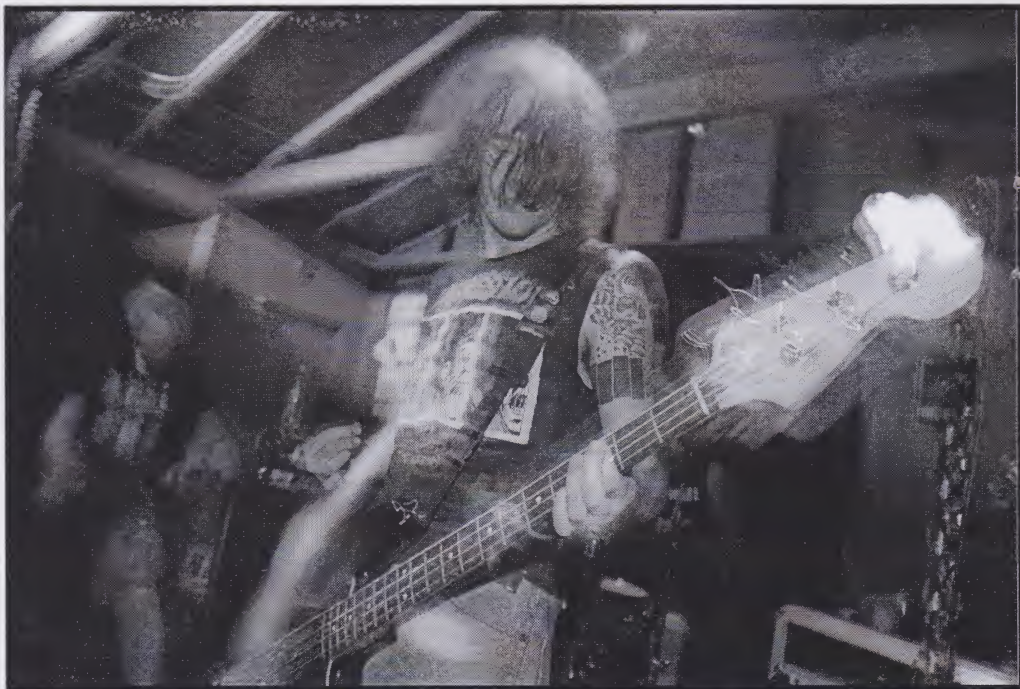


# THE RITES









This photo and the previous two, and next page of THE RITES @ Chef Cafe 7.27.03  
Bottom @ the Smell 8.20.04









# CUT THE S





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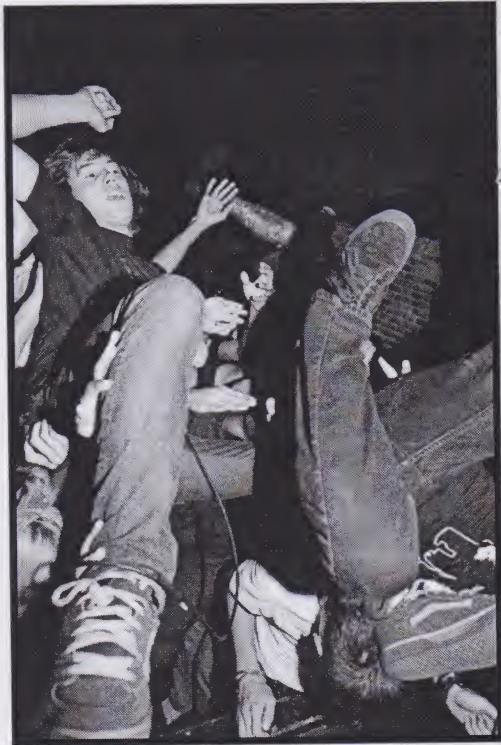


CUT THE SHIT, top and facing page @ Che Cafe 7.27.03. bottom @ the Smell 8.20.04





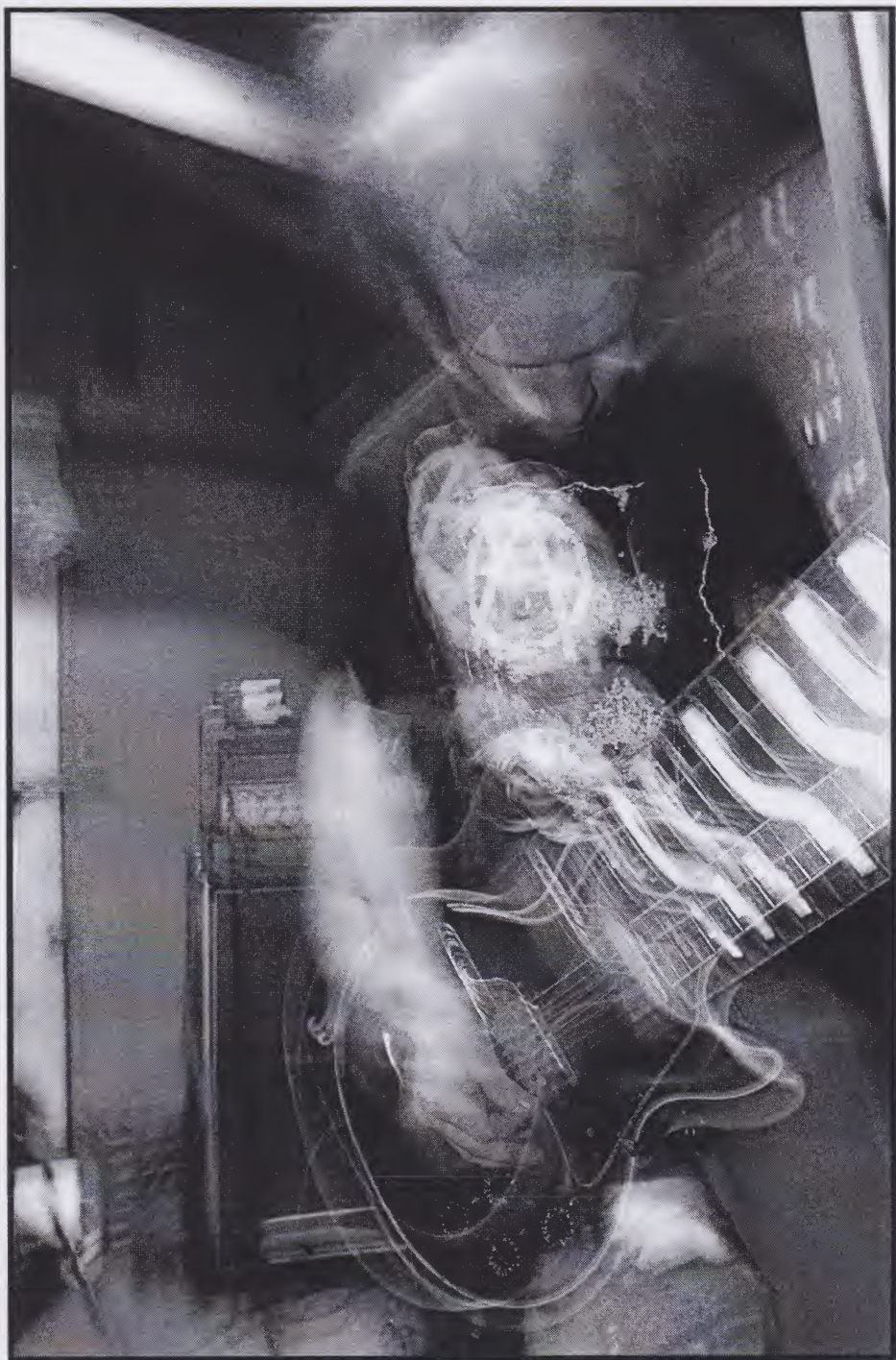




CUT THE SHIT, the two above, and bottom right @ the Smell 8.20.04. Previous page and bottom left @ the Che 7.27.03





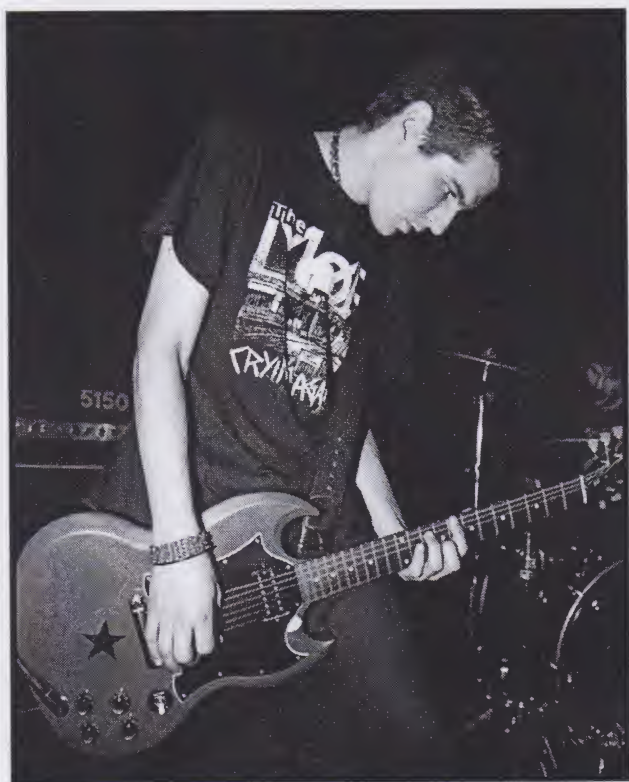


**BORN DEAD ICONS**

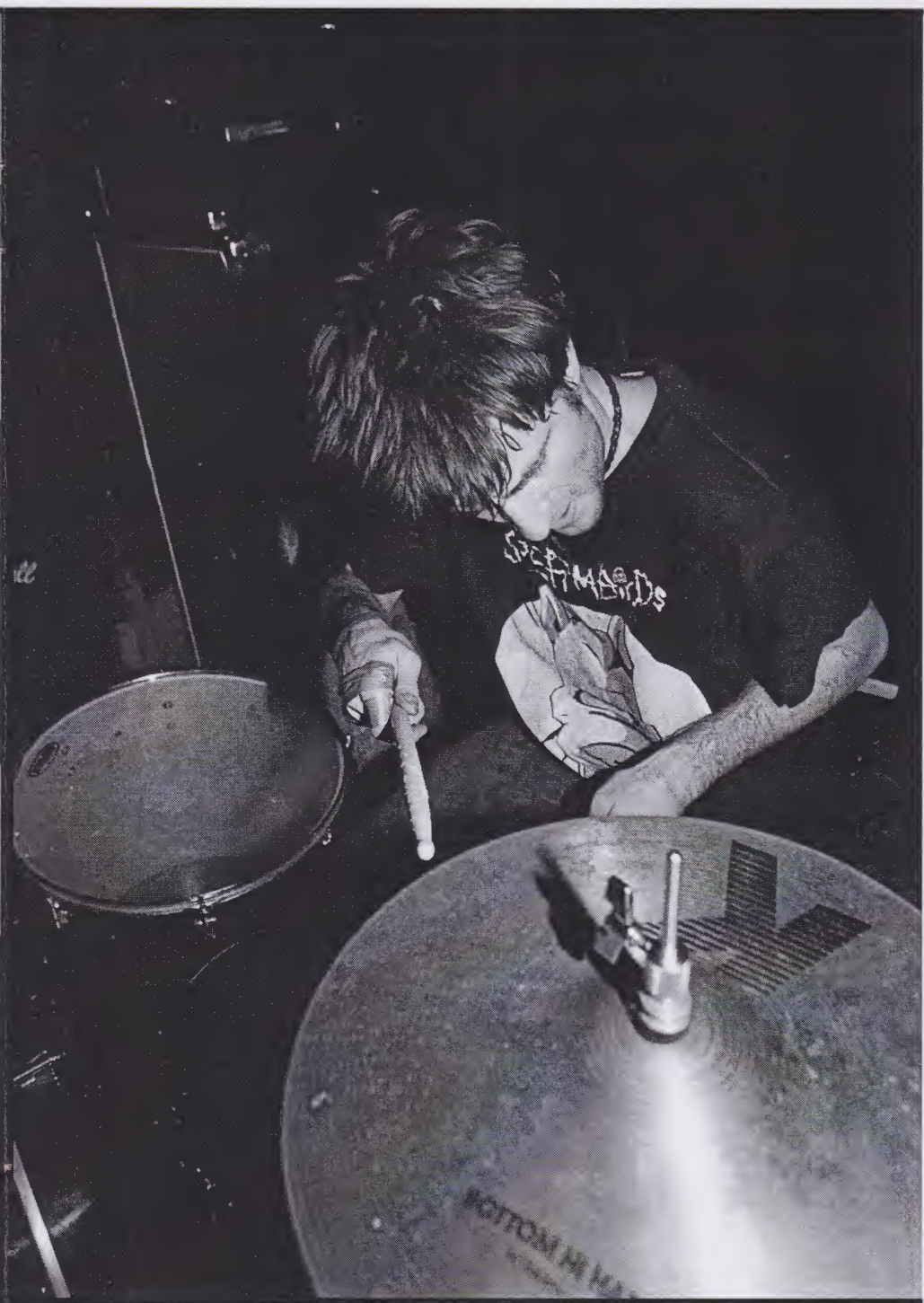




BORN DEAD ICONS photo above and previous page @ Che Cafe in San Diego 10.15.03. Below @ the Smell 4.28.02.

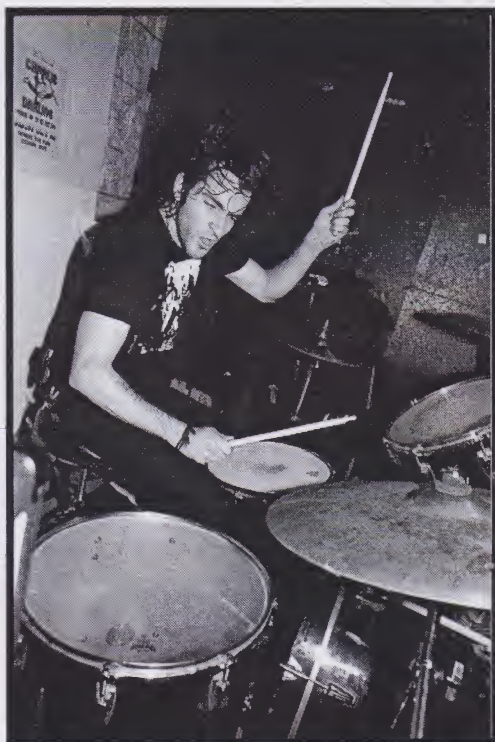




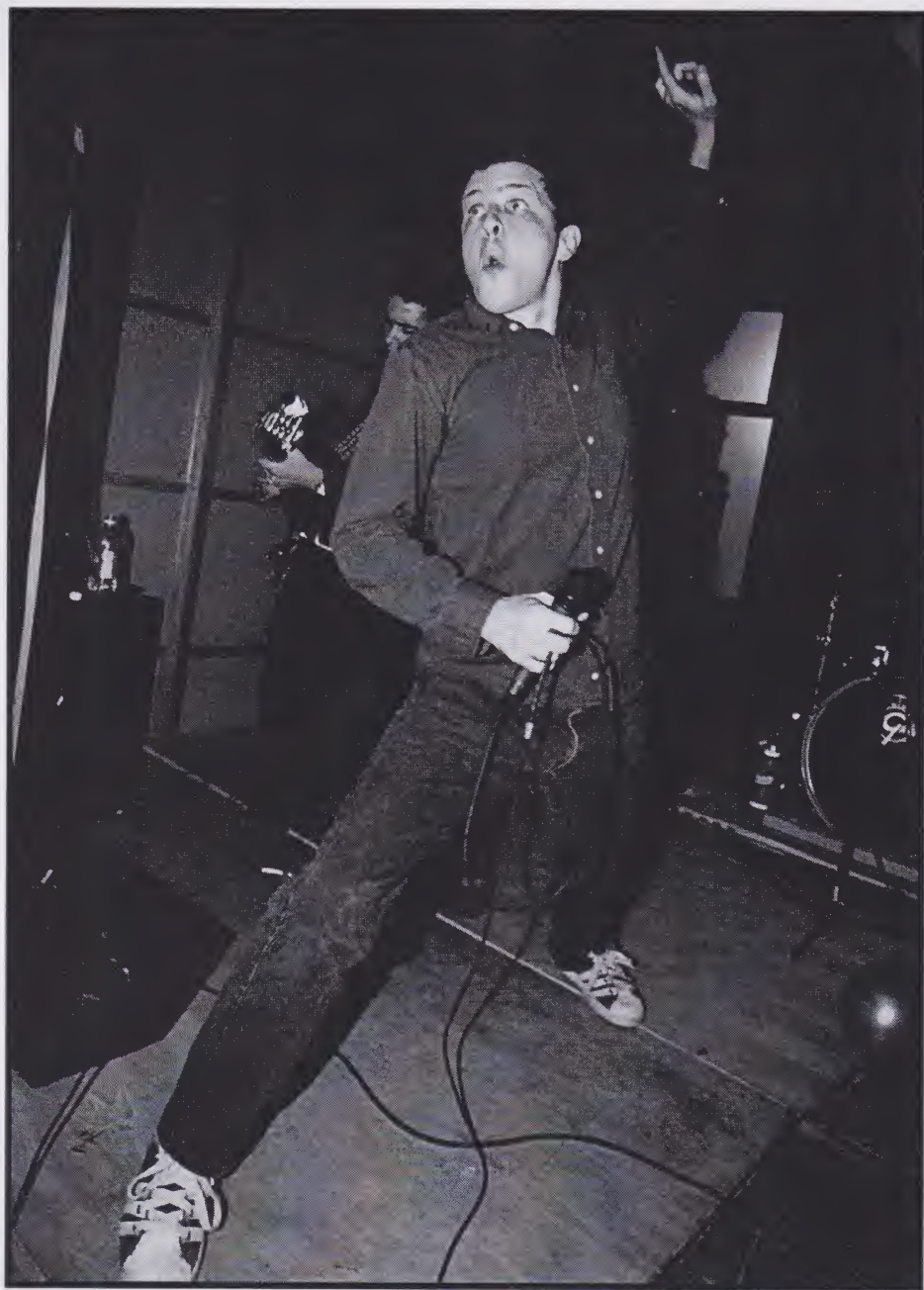




BORN DEAD ICONS photo above and on previous page @ the Smell 4.28.02. Photos below @ Che Cafe in San Diego 10.15.03



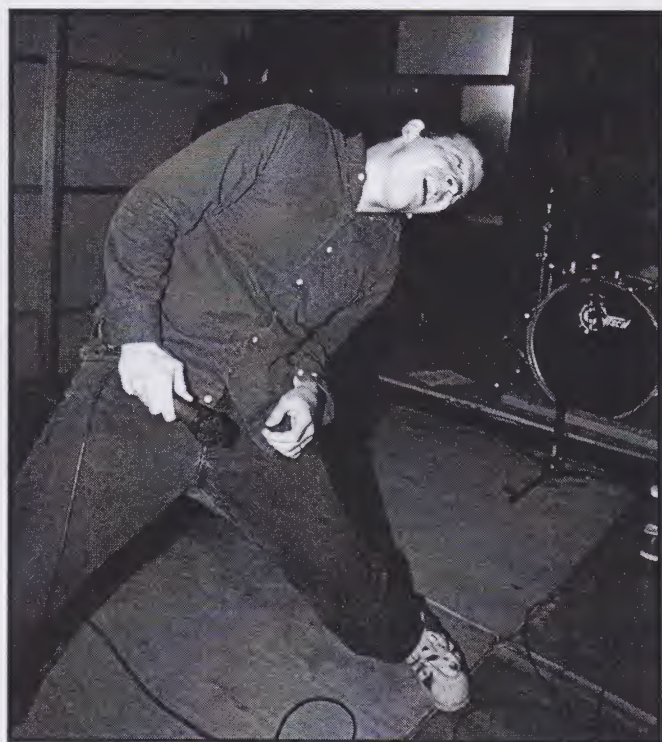


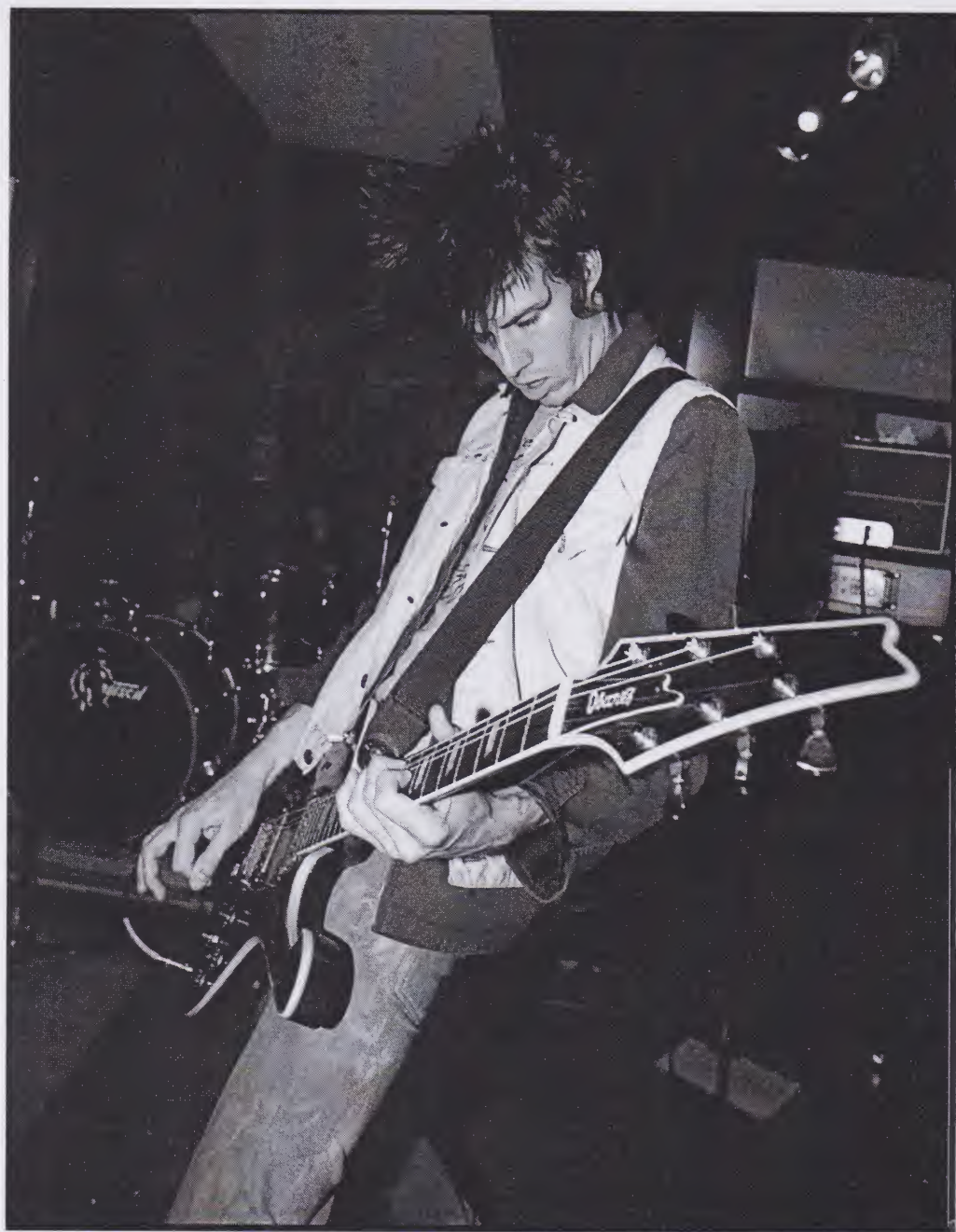


# WRANGLER BRUTES









WRANGLER BRUTES photos were taken at Koo's Cafe in Long Beach, CA October 2003





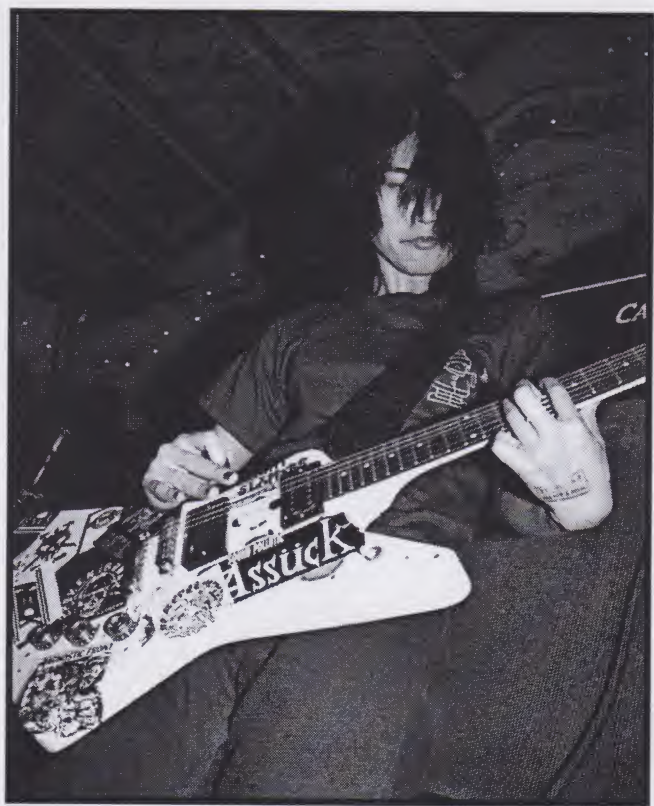
# ROMANTIC GORILLA





ROMANTIC GORILLA photos this page and previous @ Mission Records, San Francisco 3.22.98.





ROMANTIC GORILLA photos this page @ Gilman 3.21.98

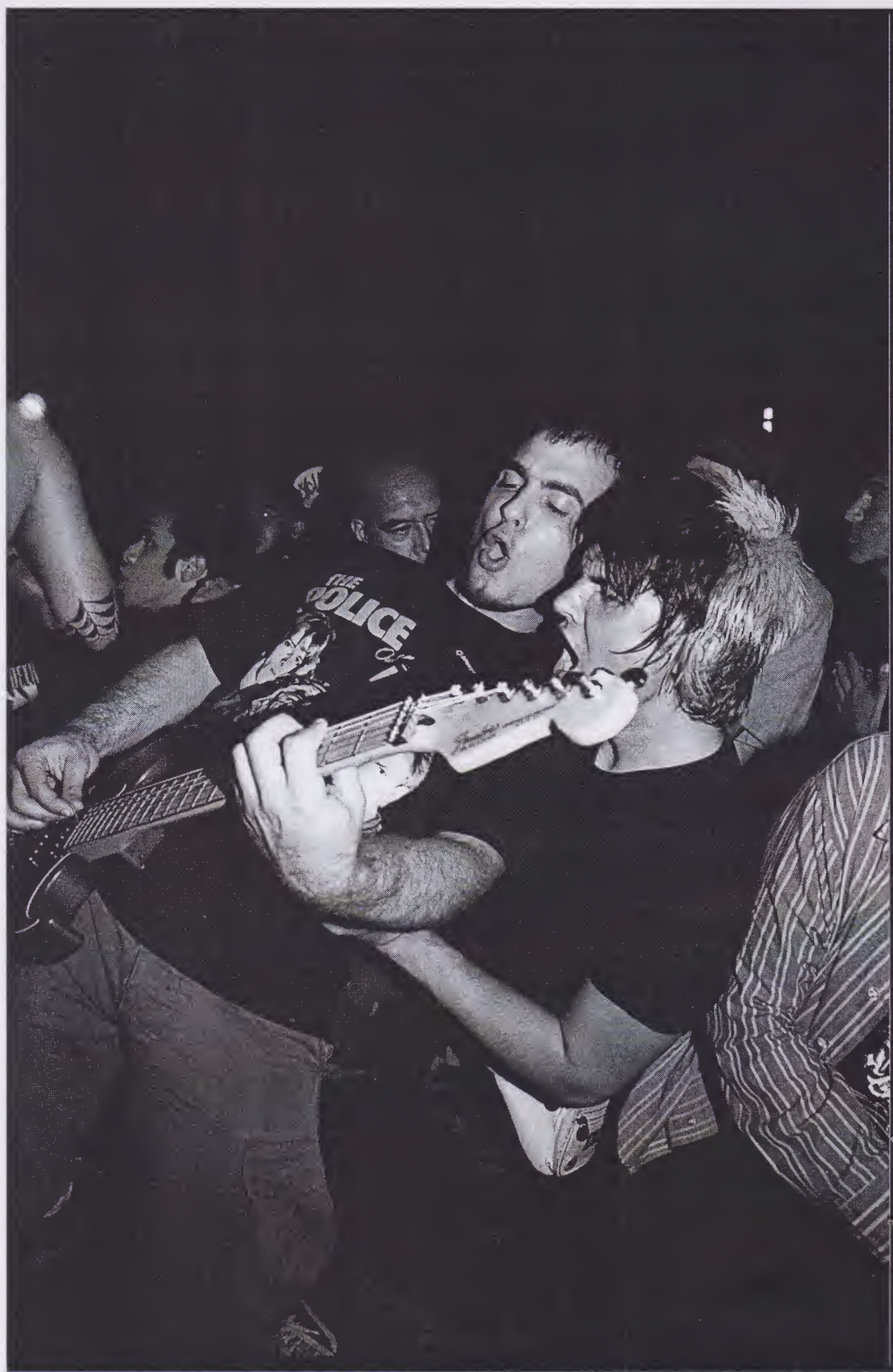




# TEAR IT UP













TEAR IT UP photos on this page and the three previous pages @ the Smell 7.18.02





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**ACK ACK ACK**

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**CUT THE SHIT**